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ART IN AMERICA *AND ELSEWHERE*

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A BURGUNDIAN GOTHIC GROUP
PHILIP THE GOOD WITH ST. JOHN BAPTIST
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A BURGUNDIAN GOTHIC GROUP
PHILIP THE GOOD WITH ST. JOHN BAPTIST



IF there is anything mysterious and wonderful in the history of art; if there is anything which is beyond reach of the imagination—which defies contemplation, and compels us to recognize how small is our understanding of the workings of the human mind, it is the simultaneous appearance on the soil of France of a body of great artists who were to found and crown what we know as French Gothic sculpture. There have been similar outbursts of genius elsewhere, in ancient Greece and modern Italy for example, but none so swift, none so surprising as well as exclusive. In France the art of sculpture blossomed in the thirteenth century while poetry and painting had scarcely budded: a sublime aesthetic impulse seemed to invade the chisel while the pen and the brush were yet struggling modestly for a little inspiration. And how high these sculptors soared. From the crude efforts of their immediate predecessors to harmonize the formal Romanesque figures with

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the pointed arch and lofty vault, they leaped at a bound to the noble heads of the early Greeks, joining these to stately columnar figures which appear to form a spiritual as well as a material part of the majestic buildings they adorn.

We are unable to solve the psychological problem involved in this outburst of art in the thirteenth century, but we may reasonably hazard the suggestion that the rapid progression to the Greek type of countenance was due chiefly to the fact that the sculptors had little work to do connected with ordinary life, as portraiture or history, and so their attention was almost entirely confined to sacred personages as to whose features there was no record or rarely any convention. They were thus compelled to bring their imaginations to bear in the delineation of nearly every head, the accomplishment of general ideals being the natural result. But these sculptors were little concerned with the proportions of the human figure. Having attained to almost the highest type of head known in art, they were satisfied with general forms which harmonized with the stately Gothic architectural designs, irrespective of close points of anatomy or proportion. They had not to consider the nude, which indeed could scarcely be applied to such surroundings, while in most cases the simplest formal drapery sufficed to complete the figures. But as time advanced the range of art widened; secular forms and subjects were more and more considered, and changes in Gothic architecture permitted the freer display of the figure, though compelling a reduction in the number of associated sculptured forms. The fourteenth century saw the natural contour of the torso more closely followed, the drapery elaborated, and the general design less formal. Towards the end of this century and at the beginning of the next, Gothic sculpture in France reached its greatest breadth in design, and its highest point in the development of the figure. The anatomy of the body was often closely imitated; clothing was represented in minute detail, and some attention was given to the representation of action. Meanwhile the palace began to compete with the church for the acquisition of works of art, sculptors multiplied, and more important than all, Italian influence began to creep over France, very slowly to be sure in respect of architecture, but in sculpture after the first quarter of the fifteenth century many an experiment was made in France in the direction of transition.

We must then look to the first thirty or forty years of the fifteenth century for the most fully developed French Gothic sculptures, unalloyed with symptoms of revolution. We find them in several

provinces of the France of the time, but in none of them was the art so highly developed as in Burgundy, then forming a separate State under Philip the Bold (1342-1404;) his son John the Fearless (1371-1419) and his grandson Philip the Good (1396-1467). It was the Duke Philip the Bold, who was chiefly responsible for the advance in Burgundian art. He gathered together at Dijon the cream of the artists of his own and surrounding countries, even going so far as to entice away the leading sculptors working in Paris for his brother, Charles V of France. The leader of these artists was Claes Sluter, by birth a Dutchman, who spent nearly thirty years (1375-1404) working for the Duke, and carried Burgundian sculpture to a high pitch of excellence. There was no noticeable variation from the peculiar Burgundian type of work resulting from his Dutch origin, for the art of Flanders and its surroundings was practically as closely allied with that of Burgundy as were the two States politically at the time, both being ruled by Philip, and indeed this condition continued till the maturity of Jan Van Eyck. The influence of Sluter was so powerful that by the time he had been working at Dijon for ten or fifteen years his manner more or less pervaded the whole Dijon school, and as quite a number of his fellow workers were nearly as good as himself, it is not surprising that his sculptures are sometimes difficult to distinguish from those of his confreres.

The general trend of Sluter's art was in the direction of naturalism. He disrobed the art of the third quarter of the fourteenth century from much of its formalism, closely following the lines of the living torso, producing free and graceful folds of drapery, and modelling his portrait heads true to life in detail. His school thus brought about an important development in Gothic sculpture. After Sluter retired into a monastery in 1404, the Burgundian type of figure remained unchanged till the Renaissance influence crept in, but breadth in design was somewhat enhanced, and for thirty or forty years after the turn of the century there were produced at Dijon some of the most stately and beautiful figures and groups remaining to us in late Gothic art.

These observations are necessary for the comprehension of the position in art of the Dijon sculptured group we have now before us. Very rarely indeed does such a work appear for criticism, and still more rarely do we meet with a Burgundian portrait effigy of first class historical importance. The group is obviously of the late school of Claes Sluter, and dates about the end of the first quarter of the

fifteenth century. It represents a knight kneeling in an act of devotion before his departure on an errand of war. A figure of St. John Baptist stands behind him with a hand resting on his shoulder in an attitude of sympathy and protection. The knight is in full armour save for his casque. The armour is of a Gothic pattern in extensive use amongst the nobility in France and Burgundy in the second quarter of the fifteenth century, and up to a little later time in England, for the two former countries led the way in fashions of armour as Paris does now in those of women's attire. A precisely similar suit of armour, except for a few minor details, is shown on the tomb of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who died in 1439, and another very close to it is on the monument of John, Earl of Arundel (1408-1435). The armour on the kneeling figure of the group is of a little earlier style than the Warwick example, being free from the large ridged elbow pieces distinguishing the latter, while the finely pointed sabbatons (the points are not observable in the photographs as the only visible foot has its end behind the base) are more severe in type. From this and the general evidence available we must conclude that the armour cannot be of a later date than 1450, which is close to the latest period of the work under consideration if we take the character of the sculpture alone into account. Sluter left behind him some highly gifted co-workers and pupils who maintained an exclusive type in their designs for a lengthy period, so that it is often only after long and close study that we can distinguish between the periods of different works which may have been executed twenty or thirty years apart. Indeed there are works of Sluter himself which for many years were assigned to dates varying up to a half century after his death. In this particular group the Gothic art of Burgundy has practically reached its culminating point. The modelling of the knight's form, the expressive countenance of St. John, and particularly the details of features and hair, are so true to life that the naturalism of the group can go no further without departing from the pure Gothic spirit, and encroaching upon a suggestion of strong action characteristic of the Renaissance revolution in French sculpture. Hence it is proper to place the sculpture a score of years or so after Sluter left the scene, for about this time would be required for the advance indicated.

A striking feature of the work is the fine carving of the head of the kneeling figure. The face bears a distinct family likeness to that of the kneeling form of Philip the Bold, grandfather of Philip the

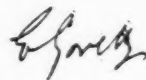
Good, which was sculptured by Sluter for the Chartreuse at Dijon, and it is quite obvious that the artist of this group had Sluter's work in mind when making his design. The figure of St. John Baptist is of the invariable type of this Saint adopted by the Dijon school. He is shown as an elderly man with long hair and beard, holding a lamb to his breast with his right arm. The countenance is eloquent with an expression of sympathetic concern, and the figure reminds one strongly of the statue of the Saint by Sluter in the Autun Museum. Indeed, except for the manner of treating the hair, the head of the Saint might easily be taken for the work of Sluter. The back of the standing figure is squared and holed for the purpose of attaching the group to a wall, and here it was evidently fixed for centuries, being placed some height, probably eight or ten feet, above the ground level.

There is a small separate base for the group—a sculptured block of stone about a foot square and of equal height, unimportant in itself, but revealing a pregnant story. On the sloping front, set in a bedding of vine leaves, is a heraldic shield on which are cut some diagonal lines. They are vague now through the wear of time, but distinct enough on close inspection. One quickly brings to mind the great Burgundian banner—gold bands on an azure field, which for centuries was held aloft in many a fierce battle in France and Flanders. And surely enough these lines were carved to mark the bands, and we know the kneeling knight to belong to the powerful family which made such potent history in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and whose record is a series of alternate noble deeds and violent acts wrapped around with tragedy sufficient for a thousand dramas. Later on the banded shield was quartered with the lilies of France, but at the time our group was sculptured no prouder ensign than the simpler banner floated over Europe.

It is fortunate that circumstances enable us to determine with accuracy the identity of this Burgundian prince. We have seen that the date of the sculpture is in the neighborhood of 1425 to 1430. Only the ducal family carried this shield in the duchy, and during the first thirty or forty years of the fifteenth century there were only three younger men of the Burgundy house living. These were Antoine, second son of the Duke Philip the Bold, who was born in 1384; Philip, third son of the same duke, born in 1388; and Philip the Good, son of John the Fearless, and grandson of the above duke, born in 1396. Antoine and Philip his brother were killed at Agincourt in 1514, and there could be no suggestion in either case that the

kneeling figure was a posthumous representation, because long before their death their heraldic shields were changed. Antoine was created Duke of Brabant in 1405, and his shield thereafter bore the Brabant quarterings of lions with fleurs-de-lys; while Philip was made Duke of Nevers when John the Fearless succeeded his father in 1404, and took the same coat of arms as his brother. There remains then only Philip, the son and successor of John the Fearless, who became Duke of Burgundy in 1419, and has always been known in history as Philip the Good. It may be further added that this Philip left only one legitimate son, Charles the Bold, who was not born till 1433. The sculpture therefore unquestionably represents the Duke Philip the Good as a young knight in an act of prayer preparatory to taking part in a military enterprise. For some years in the early part of his reign he was continually fighting, so it is impossible to suggest a particular year for the representation, but at the date of the sculpture already given, Philip was at an age closely corresponding to that suggested in the effigy. The idea of representing the Duke with an attending figure of St. John Baptist was no doubt suggested by the group formerly at the Chartreuse, but now at the Dijon Museum, where his grandfather, Philip the Bold, is shown with this saint.

The original locale of this beautiful work is obvious. In the second half of the fourteenth century, Philip the Bold erected (or rather partially built, for the work was not finished till the next century), a magnificent Chartreuse to hold the tombs of himself and his family, and it was specially for the sculptural work connected with this edifice that he brought Claes Sluter to Dijon. The mausoleum contained, besides tombs, only monuments having reference to the Burgundy family, or general compositions, and from every point of view we may regard it as certain that this is where the group stood. The sculpture was probably fixed in the church of the Chartreuse, a small part of which is still standing. The building remained fairly intact until the French Revolution, when it was ransacked, and the sculptures that could be taken down without much difficulty were removed. Amongst these was no doubt numbered the group under discussion.



ENGLISH WHOLE LENGTH PORTRAITS IN AMERICA

GAINSBOROUGH'S "BLUE BOY"

SO much has been written,¹ and so little is really known concerning the early history of Gainsborough's famous portrait of Master Jonathan Buttall, "The Blue Boy," recently purchased by Mr. Henry E. Huntington from the Duke of Westminster, that, in re-opening a somewhat thorny and controversial subject, the best one can do is to sift the mass of evidence and to deliver what is known in legal circles as a "considered judgment." It is curious to note that the United States now possesses the two pictures by which Gainsborough is best known all over the world—his two most famous though not, perhaps, his two most splendid portraits—Mr. J. P. Morgan's Duchess of Devonshire and Mr. Huntington's "Blue Boy." It thus almost looks as if we in England were shifting our artistic, as well as our financial, problems on to the broad shoulders of Brother Jonathan! The controversies which broke out over these two pictures half a century ago are today no nearer final and definite settlement, for the earlier histories of both pictures are more a matter of theory than of fact. It is possible that, in years to come, documents may come to light which will settle some of these problems, and so far as the Duke of Westminster's "Blue Boy" is concerned, there should be among the archives of that family some definite record as to when and from whom it was purchased.

In all cases where there are two versions of the same picture, the first to be recorded, or to come to light, has always the greater chance of being accepted as the original; and, having taken its place as such, it is not easy to dislodge it from that position. The *onus probandi* therefore rests with the owner of the second version which comes to light. The Westminster-Huntington "Blue Boy" is not only fortunate in being the first in the field, and in having a start of half a century, but no writer of any authority has even thrown a shadow of doubt on its being wholly the work of Thomas Gainsborough, R. A. Where experts are so prone to differ and disagree,

¹ *Notes and Queries*, 1869-70, passim. F. G. Stephens, Grosvenor Gallery Catalogue of the Gainsborough Exhibition, London, 1885, pp. 35-38. William H. Fuller, "Gainsborough's Blue Boy," New York, 1898 (with photogravure of the Fuller-Hearn version). Sir Walter Armstrong, "Gainsborough and His Place in Art," 1904, pp. 161-166 (with half-tone block of the Westminster-Huntington version). James Greig, "Gainsborough," 1909, pp. 90-93 (with frontispiece in colours of the Westminster-Huntington version). W. T. Whitley, "Thomas Gainsborough," 1915, pp. 372-378 (with half-tone block of the Westminster-Huntington version). W. Roberts, George A. Hearn Sale Catalogue, New York, 1918, Lot 450 (with half-tone block of the Fuller-Hearn version).

this unanimity is not without its value. The remarkable fact is that no mention has been found of either the "Blue Boy" or Master Buttall as the person represented until ten years after the artist's death. "Perhaps his [Gainsborough's] best portrait," wrote the artist's friend Jackson in his essay on Gainsborough in January, 1798, "is that known among the painters as The Blue Boy; it was in the possession of Mr. Buttall, near Newport Market" (London); and from that passage it is clear that the "Blue Boy" was well-known to those who formed the art world of London at that time. Jackson speaks in the past tense, which suggests that Mr. Buttall no longer owned the picture. Mr. W. T. Whitley, in his "Thomas Gainsborough," (p. 374) quotes another reference to the "Blue Boy" which appeared in the *European Magazine* of August, 1798, in which the writer describes it as "one of the finest pictures" which Gainsborough ever painted, and stated that it "is now in the possession of a tradesman in Greek Street" (Mr. Buttall's business residence). The next owner of it was John Nesbitt, M. P., of 20 Grafton Street, London. He may have bought it from Mr. Buttall, or at the Buttall sale in Greek Street, Soho, in 1796, when Mr. Buttall gave up the old-established ironmongery business, and sold off his stock in trade, etc. No copy of the sale catalogue can be found, and only the advertisements of the sale are left to guide us. It included "a valuable collection of Gainsborough Drawings, a few capital pictures by Gainsborough, Gainsborough Dupont [the artist's nephew, pupil and assistant] and others." By 1802 Nesbitt was in financial difficulties, and the contents of his town house were sold by the firm of Cox, Burrell and Foster, on the premises on May 25 of that year. The "Blue Boy" apparently figures in the sale catalogue as lot 63: "Gainsborough.—A whole-length figure, with a fine landscape in the Background. This most incomparable performance ranks this very celebrated Master among the First Class of Painters, ancient and modern. It has the Grace and Elegance of Vandyck in the Figure, with a Countenance as forcibly expressed and as rich as Murillo, with the management of Titian," etc. The picture realised £68.5/, according to Seguier's "Dictionary," 1870, p. 72.

A further stage in the picture's history is found in the "Anecdotes of Painters," 1808, by Edward Edwards, A. R. A., who died in 1806, in or before which year he must therefore have written this passage with which he starts a list of Gainsborough's pictures: "A Whole-length portrait of a young gentleman, in a Vandyck dress, which



THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH: THE BLUE BOY
Collection of Mr. H. E. Huntington



picture obtained the title of the Blue Boy,² from the colour of the satin in which the figure is dressed. It is not exaggerated praise to say, that this portrait might stand among those of Vandyck. It is now in possession of Mr. Hoppner, R. A."

It will be seen, therefore, that the foregoing facts narrow down the successive ownership of the "Blue Boy," to within a short compass of years. Up to 1796 or 1798 it was in Mr. Buttall's own possession; before and until 1802, it belonged to Mr. Nesbitt, M. P.; in 1806 it belonged to John Hoppner, R. A. (who died on January 23, 1810). The next we hear of it is when it was exhibited by Earl Grosvenor at the British Institution in 1814, No. 23, as "A Youth." Earl Grosvenor was created Marquess of Westminster in 1831 and like his father was the patron and friend of Hoppner, his father having acted as godfather to the artist's second son, Richard Belgrave Hoppner in January, 1786. Whether Hoppner held the "Blue Boy" for another person, or whether it was his absolute property it is now impossible to determine, nor is it material. That it passed from Hoppner to Earl Grosvenor is without a doubt. John Young, the engraver, who etched the picture at Grosvenor House, and published an official catalogue of the pictures there, May 12, 1820, states in his entry of the "Blue Boy": "This picture was purchased at Mr. Buttall's sale [1796] by Mr. Nesbitt; it afterwards became the property of Mr. Hoppner, who disposed of it to Earl Grosvenor."

The history of the second, or Fuller-Hearn version, rests largely on tradition. Mr. Fuller, in his monograph, states this history at considerable length. Briefly, it is this: According to a passage in Thornbury's "Life of J. M. W. Turner, R. A.," 1862 (vol. ii, p. 63), the Rev. Mr. Trimmer, a son of one of Turner's executors, George Prince of Wales once owned Gainsborough's "Blue Boy," and sent it to Mr. Nesbitt with a bill for £300 "which he had the satisfaction of paying." "I heard him many years ago," continued Mr. Trimmer, "tell the story at my father's table." We have seen that the picture passed out of Mr. Nesbitt's possession in 1802. By 1815, when Mr. Nesbitt had discharged his debts, and had taken up his residence at his country house at Heston, a "Blue Boy" had arrived there. In 1820 Nesbitt was again in financial difficulties, and his pictures were again sold. The "Blue Boy" was among these, and became the property of William Hall, an auctioneer who died in October, 1856. At

² In a footnote is added: "This was a portrait of a Master Brutall [Buttall] whose father was then a very considerable ironmonger, in Greek Street, Soho."

the sale of his property the "Blue Boy" was bought by a Mr. Dawson, who sold it to Mr. J. Sewell. In July, 1870, the portrait was placed in the hands of Messrs. Hogarth, the picture dealers of London, for sale. It is not necessary to enter into the sensation which the picture caused when it was placed on view at 96 Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, for the daily newspapers and the art periodicals of the time were full of it. The sum total of it all was this: the Duke of Westminster's version was not dislodged from its proud position; and the Fuller-Hearn picture was not proved to be what it was claimed to be by its owner, Mr. Sewell. The Duke's picture was lent to public exhibition in London and elsewhere, in 1814, 1834, 1857, 1862, 1870, 1885, and 1896, and stood all the tests of the changing fashions in art criticism. On the other hand, there was no disputing that the rival claimant was a picture of very fine quality, or it would not have received all the notice given to it. It was bought from Messrs. Hogarth by Sir Joseph Hawley and was purchased from his brother, Sir Henry Hawley by the late Mr. Martin H. Colnaghi, who sold it to Mr. William Fuller of New York, from whose possession it passed into that of the late Mr. George A. Hearn, and is now the property of his daughter, Mrs. Clarkson Cowl. Until and unless convincing evidence to the contrary is produced, we may take it as certain that Mr. Huntington's "Blue Boy" is the Buttall-Nesbitt (1802)-Hoppner-Westminster portrait painted by Gainsborough; and that Mrs. Clarkson Cowl's is the Prince of Wales-Nesbitt (1815)-Hall-Dawson-Sewell-Hawley-Fuller-Hearn picture. In other words, that there are two versions of which one belonged to Nesbitt in 1802 and the other in 1815.

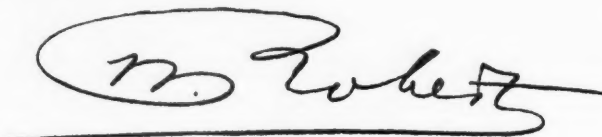
But who painted the second of these two versions? That is a question which has disturbed most of Gainsborough's biographers. Gainsborough, we know from his own letters, hated the drudgery of portrait-painting, and would have painted only landscapes had he only his own wishes to consider. It seems hardly likely that he would have painted a replica of a whole-length portrait except by a Royal command. It has been suggested that Hoppner made a copy of the picture whilst it was in his possession, but Hoppner at that time was fully occupied, and that theory may be dismissed. Still less was he likely to have sold a spurious picture, or even a copy by himself as a genuine work of Gainsborough to Earl Grosvenor. Hitherto the Hoppner-copy theory has been usually put forward as a solution of the problem involved by the existence of the two versions. But

those who have closely studied Gainsborough's work of the Bath and London periods will agree that no artist has yet copied him satisfactorily, or sufficiently well to deceive anyone for more than a moment—with one solitary but all-important exception, the artist's nephew, pupil and assistant, Gainsborough Dupont (1755–1797). Gainsborough Dupont was practically brought up by his uncle, was apprenticed to him on January 12, 1772, remained with him until his death on August 2, 1788, and it may be added, is buried with him at Kew. He was his uncle's *alter ego*, knew every phase of his palette, and probably had a hand in all the portraits which he painted during the last ten years of his life. Thicknesse, an old friend of Gainsborough, pronounced the nephew to be a "man of exquisite genius, little inferior in the line of a painter to his uncle"; whilst a later authority, writing more especially with Dupont's engravings after his uncle's pictures in mind, declares that "he was imbued with his [Gainsborough's] very spirit, from the touching of the hair to the exquisite details of the costume." Yet another writer, Seguiet, wrote, "Gainsborough Dupont was an artist of considerable ability, and completed most successfully some of his uncle's unfinished works." And not only this: the patrons of the uncle continued to employ the nephew, and there is in existence a bill which shows that in 1795, George III commissioned him to paint seven royal portraits for which he received £493.10/. Many portraits in private and public collections attributed to Thomas Gainsborough and accepted as his work without question by generations of critics are either wholly or in part the work of the nephew; and that, I think, solves the whole problem which surrounds the second of the two "Blue Boys." Why the Prince of Wales should have wanted a portrait of the son of an ironmonger is likely to remain an unsolved mystery.

There are many points in connection with the "Blue Boy"—such as the reason for Gainsborough painting a youth in a blue dress—but only one need be referred to, and that is the date of the painting. It is probably one of the three whole lengths which Gainsborough sent from Bath to the Royal Academy of 1770, and figured in the Catalogue as No. 85, "Portrait of a young gentleman." And it is doubtless this portrait which Mary Moser, R. A. (one of the only two women to be so elected) described in a letter on the Exhibition to Fuseli, who was then in Rome, as that in which "Gainsborough [is] beyond himself in a portrait of a gentleman in a Vandyke dress."

There are other reasons for placing the portrait at this period of Gainsborough's Bath period; whilst Sir Walter Armstrong points to "the loaded impasto, the ruddy carnations, the tendency to brown and beyond it, in the shadows," and so forth, as placing the portrait at about 1770, rather than nine years later than the period to which it has sometimes been assigned.

A brief reference may be made, in conclusion, to the personage in the picture. There can be no reasonable doubt as to the identity of this graceful and handsome youth. It is of Jonathan Buttall, the son of a wealthy ironmonger of Greek Street, Soho, where the family, originally of Wrexham, had been established for generations. Mr. Whitley reminds us that Buttall was one of the "few of those friends" whom Gainsborough most respected, and whom the painter desired should attend his funeral at Kew. Jonathan Buttall died at his house in Oxford Street towards the close of 1805, and is described in the *Morning Herald* of December 2, as "a gentleman whose aimable manners and good disposition will cause him to be ever regretted by his friends."



THE PLACE OF CLASSICAL ART IN THE PRIVATE COLLECTION

THAT art amateurs of real discrimination and truly high standards will in but a few years be in keen competition with and outbidding one another to acquire such objects of classical art as appear in the market, I confidently expect, but with the present absorption by museums and the governmental restrictions now in force in Greece, Egypt and elsewhere and which will in the future rather be tightened than relaxed, the supply of really worth while objects, already very limited, must in the near future become almost negligible.

Why this interest on the part of amateurs has not already more strongly manifested itself in this country and the quest developed for these beautiful objects, is quite unaccountable. We have, quite apart from the ever-increasing multitude of our friends, now affecting the fine arts, especially our charming competing modern Dianas of the Chase in the auction rooms and art shops—many highly cultured, serious and sound collectors, and that they have not long ago given closer attention to this, most important and beyond all question most beautiful phase, especially of the plastic arts, the world has ever known, is a rather curious commentary on their otherwise excellent taste, perception, artistic understanding and development.

I have quite often been met with the statement by collectors of intelligence, that the average available ancient sculpture is almost always incomplete or fragmentary and thereby loses greatly in beauty and art value, and that this argues against any such object however otherwise important finding a place in their home amongst other beautiful and "perfect" objects. This is surely unsound and with them the true reason generally is that they are not only quite lacking in imagination but entirely miss the beauty itself of the object and are incapable of comprehending in the true sense its great art.

To them, while in other directions often manifesting an almost irrepressible artistic frenzy, the transcendent beauty and nobility of such works as the Pedimental figures from the glorious Parthenon and the Demeter of Cnidos now in the British Museum, the Hermes of Praxiteles at Olympia, the Venus of Melos in the Louvre, and the eternal and mysterious charm and power of the Sphinx at Gizeh, the vivid realism of the wonderful figures of the Princess Nefert and her husband Rahotep and the superb majesty of the statues of Chephren and Ra-Nofer at Cairo, all must, for the same reason, mean little or

nothing. These also are all more or less poor battered fragments of their former selves but to those capable of coming under the spell of and feeling their unique and profound beauty and loveliness, they are still quite perfect.

And yet these same people will exhibit with evident pride early Italian primitive paintings—often “over painted” and retouched, Ispahan carpets largely restored and “filled in,” and early furniture, very often “made up.” These also are mere fragments of the originals, a fact as to which if they are not in complete ignorance, at least they are quite willing to deceive and delude themselves.

Of all the arts, the art of Ancient Greece and Egypt is beautiful in itself and carries with it its own message and weaves its own spell. Its beauty must be seen and felt—and if one cannot see nor feel it, then, I fear, it is futile to endeavor to explain wherein it lies, or to dwell in detail upon its perfections. This perfect beauty remains and its spirit and spell are ever present whether the figure of an Aphrodite or Hermes be complete or merely a torso or fragment; whether the object be merely the detached head of a sculptured figure of Rameses II or Akhnaton, providing, of course, the true and beautiful art of Greece and Egypt as represented by their artists was there in the first instance.

While naturally not arguing in favor of the fragment in preference to the perfect original, I maintain that a beautiful Greek or Egyptian object in its virginal form, even though now not quite ‘perfect,’ still possesses its original innate beauty and illusion and seldom requires or is improved by the work of the modern restorer.

For myself I confess to a certain weakness for these beautiful fragments. They permit of an additional and delightful play to the imagination and to contemplate a beautiful torso and in one’s mind’s eye endeavor to visualize and build upon it its original beautiful head and other parts as of its correct period is an altogether fascinating pastime.

It is a truism that good art is good art of whatever epoch, but this by no means implies that all good art is equal and the more beautiful and greater art, the art involving the higher ideals and imagination, will to those of true artistic receptivity and vision surely dwarf the lesser when put to the test.

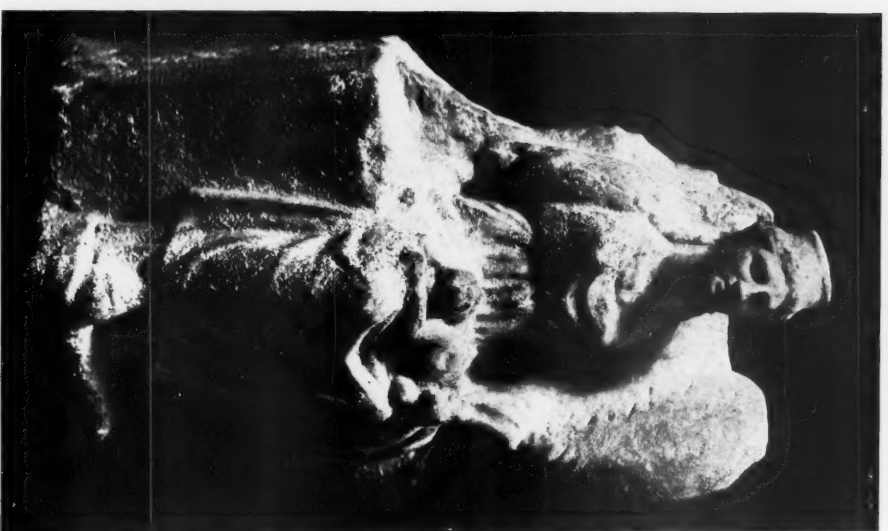
Any one possessing this vision and receptivity, if he place in his home a beautiful piece of classical sculpture beside one of the later or Christian era, and live with it for a reasonable period of time, will find



TORSO OF HERMES, MARBLE
CONTEMPORARY AND SIMILAR TO THE HERMES
OF PRAXITELES

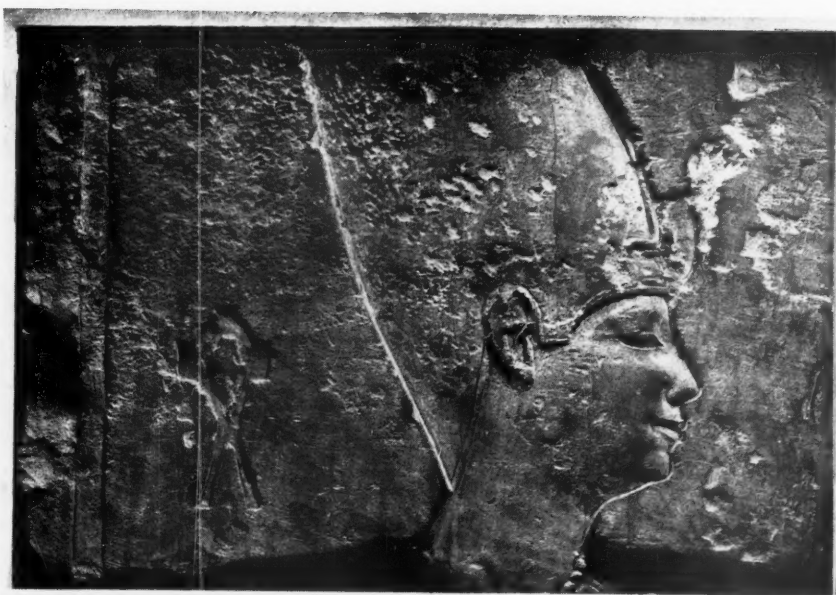


THE DEMETER OF KNIDOS
British Museum
The Hermes and the Kybele in the Collection of Mr. Walter A. Roselle, New York



STATUETTE OF KYBELE, MOTHER OF THE GODS
GREEK SCULPTURE IN MARBLE. FOURTH
CENTURY, B. C.





PORTRAIT HEAD OF RAMESES II. LIMESTONE
EGYPTIAN. XIX DYNASTY

THOTH—THE MEASURER OF THE SOUL
EGYPTIAN FAÏENCE FIGURE. XXI DYNASTY

AMULET SHAPED AS THE MENAT OF MUT
EGYPTIAN BRONZE. XXVI DYNASTY

Collection of Mr. Walter A. Roselle, New York



himself constantly turning to, gazing upon and under the influence and spell of the earlier one to the exclusion of the other. Let him try the experiment by placing, say a beautiful original sculptured head by Houdon, probably the greatest of the eighteenth century sculptors, beside any really fine Greek head and see whether this theory is not correct. And then let him remember and be impressed with the fact that not a single example of the acknowledged original Greek masterpieces mentioned in the literature of that period has survived, and that all we have before us now are the lesser ones, those of probably comparatively unknown and obscure artists. Of all the beautiful sculptures which have been bequeathed to us and have survived the ravages of time, not one was conceded in Greece itself to be of the foremost rank and quality and not one single piece of sculpture can we today, with an assurance beyond dispute, point to and claim as being an acknowledged masterpiece of that time. Even the incomparable Hermes of Praxiteles which we still possess and apart from its supreme beauty worship as the only existing authentic work by one of the truly great masters, is dismissed by Pausanias with merest passing mention, not even flattered with a comment.

Though thousands of statues are mentioned and dwelt upon by the Greek and Latin writers, such works as the Demeter of Cnidos, the Venus of Melos and Victory of Samothrace are not numbered among them. Truly the beauty of their acknowledged masterpieces defies the imagination and must have been beyond all compare.

The great purpose and aim of the Greeks in their plastic arts was not merely to reproduce, but to improve upon and transcend nature itself. Their subjects were their gods and heroes and these gods and heroes were not mere men but their superiors. In their art they accomplished a perfect fusion of naturalism with idealism and produced a sense of completeness and harmony and established canons of beauty and good taste, which will withstand the test of time and always reign supreme.

Their art reflected the glory of Greece itself, and Greece possessed the greatest and most perfect refinement of beauty in all its forms—in that of literature, philosophy, drama, dance, architecture and sculpture—the world has ever known.

The best we of today can do is to humbly submit ourselves to and try to understand and absorb the overmastering beauty of such of its heritages as may have come down to us from these extraordinary people and from such a wonderful world as then existed.

"We may praise the bodily grace of these gods and heroes, and the enchantment of their exquisite poise; we may marvel at the largeness and freedom of modelling, the rhythmic simplicity of line, and that setting of the beauty of spiritualized human form against a contrasting beauty of fine-drawn drapery quickened by the shapes which it veils and decorates; and we may be touched in the deep places of our nature by the great ideas which these figures set forth and embody. But when all that we can say has been said, the best has eluded us and remains untold: the pang and challenge of a loveliness whose secret has long since been forgotten—some moving glamour of the world's springtime, for which we have now but a vague and troubled sense. On those marble brows, fronting the ages with the candour and modesty of a resolute race, on those eyes which look forth sure, and glad, and unafraid, there seems to fall the shining of some far-off celestial splendour. Their ears are attuned to a calmer and ampler music than any our fretful ages can hear. For to them listening forever in a noble and assured tranquillity, Reason and Beauty have joined hands and sing together like the morning stars.

This, then, is the supreme value of Greek sculpture for us,—its enduring reminder of the heights to which the unaided human spirit has attained—its testimony to the unearthly beauty which human vision, so quickened and clarified, may find transfiguring earthly things. In the great epoch of Greece, the flame of the ideal burned bright and unquenchable, a flame that refined and made clean the life and thought of the race; and it was that cleanness which gave them eyes for the great and simple beauty of things, which so baffles and evades our own over-busy ages."

Thus has a scholarly writer, John Warrack, expressed himself on the subject, and his words are surely worthy of repetition.

While it is unquestionably true that in the Golden Age of Greece—under Pericles and for the hundred years following—the art of sculpture as reflected by the works of such supreme masters as Pheidias, Myron, Lysippus, Polycleitus, Scopas and Praxiteles, found the most perfect expression of plastic beauty the world has ever known, still ancient Egypt with its great civilization, intensity of religious feeling and philosophy, its mysticisms and superstitions and beliefs, its wealth and treasure, its magnificence and splendor—all covering thousands of years—also gave to the world its own wonderful art, which if not possessing a feeling of sheer beauty in the same sense or degree as that of Greece, still has a beauty most profound and possesses still other qualities of great value and extraordinary interest and fascination.

Apart from its inherent beauty and other great attributes of dignity and technique of treatment, the art of Ancient Egypt appeals to quite other of our senses, especially to the sense of the *mystérieuse*. It baffles and fascinates to an extraordinary degree, quite beyond our

poor comprehension of today, and leaves one in a mood such as is produced by no other art the world has known. It may perhaps be said to be the most mysterious art ever conceived and wrought by man.

The philosophy of the ancient Egyptian which always had in contemplation the future life in the world beyond, and which regarded the tomb as man's actual house, his eternal abode, rather than his earthly house wherein he felt he merely sojourned temporarily, is everywhere manifested in his art. It gives to it, especially in its most important works, a feeling of eternity, a feeling of infiniteness, a sense of portentous understanding, and an eloquence of silence which is found in no other phase of art since the world began, a feeling that these people may have come nearer to an understanding of the eternal riddle of the universe than any others before or since. These great works possess an inscrutability which it is impossible for us to penetrate and yet on their own part cast a spell at times quite uncanny and gripping and leave one in a state of wonder and bewilderment. They possess a sense of complete contentment, serenity and superiority and like all truly great works of art ever dominate and are never dominated, and with it all there is always present that wonderful simplicity, the loftiest and noblest quality in all truly great art.

It seems to be a fact in the history of art that the farther one goes back and the nearer one gets to the beginning of things, the greater a certain sense or feeling of divinity is to be found and felt and this is nowhere more manifested than in the truly great works of Ancient Egyptian sculpture.

In their smaller sculptured works, there is also always present an infinite charm and artistry, a subtlety, refinement and sense of the exquisite unsurpassed, but never stooping or sinking to effeminacy or mere prettiness, and the sureness and boldness of technique in drawing and chiseling, which never hesitates, is ever present. With their extraordinary decorative talents and fine sense of color, the polychroming of objects which they universally indulged in lends to them a certain vividness and great additional charm.

In their works of personal adornment such as jewelry, requiring great detail, perfection of workmanship and discriminating use of precious and semi-precious metals or material, they also excelled. For beauty of design and cunning handicraft such examples as the extraordinary royal treasure of Lahun now in the possession of the Metropolitan Museum of Art is exquisite and worthy of the best tradition and understanding of the art of the goldsmith of any age.

The art of Ancient Egypt and Greece was absolutely complete in itself, while the Christian art which followed, by reason of its very nature, philosophy, ideals and purposes, is and always will be incomplete.—Christian art, and truly great it is, still is with us and will continue, but the art of the ancients, its surpassing beauty, its ideals and message, will not, cannot, ever return. The world is not and by its very order of things cannot ever be again the same. Osiris, beneficent Lord of eternity, and Zeus, righteous father of the Gods, are no more; they belong to the past never to return. What immortality they now possess is to be found only in art and literature and there they must and always will exercise their dominion.

By voicing my own great enthusiasm on these subjects I have endeavored to emphasize the importance of the ancient arts and their great value, and the desirability of awakening here in our country collectors and amateurs to these facts—before it is too late for them to acquire representative objects.

In addition to a plate reproducing the wonderful Demeter now in the British Museum, to me in many respects the most beautiful and noblest Greek statue in existence today, I have taken the liberty of inserting reproductions of some objects from my own private collection which I feel are in their own lesser way also representative and instructive.

Balter A. Foster

A PICTURE OF ST. EUSTACE IN A LANDSCAPE
BY CARPACCIO¹

VENETIAN painting celebrates the creation. It honors all its works, the whole of the glittering spectacle, without mysticism or bigotry, and puts man triumphantly in the heart of paradise among all the riches of the earth. The beasts abound for his delight, the vegetation flourishes for his enjoyment, and nature for once is warm and friendly, without hostility, terror or mystery, without bewildering surprises, without millennial catastrophes. He is part of a universal tissue whose weave continues out beyond him, assimilating him easily to its laws.

Its world is a world of indestructible hope, bright with promise, and its life, never fretful, unperplexed by care, thrives, blooms and reaches out in all directions. It is a world for the senses, which grants them full contentment, man taking his pleasure as if it belonged to him, without much thought who proffers it or where it might lead him, except possibly that it brings physical exhaustion, and that he knows to be reparable by rest and sleep. He knows neither incontinence nor perversion, and even his Bacchanals are orderly, and the reveller, according to our notions, somewhat listless, for indulgence always leaves him a certain residue of emancipation and unconcern.

But Venetian painting is a praise of creation, Carpaccio's solemnizes the Sabbath. His world is a world *en fête*, relaxed from duty, perpetually on holiday. It is above hum-drum and moves to a stately processional rhythm. With him life becomes a pageant; and whether he shows you high or humble events; grandees in ermine and purple on golden pavements in vast sun-favored piazzas, or the mild and bookish St. Jerome, it is the same luxury of warmth and space, of large uninterrupted leisure, dealt with in the same spirit of intent amusement, fantasy, intimacy and affection.

His pictures open into a world of long intervals of silence and slow time, where no calls are made upon one, where existence draws out in a pleasantly variegated monotone, and in this world of tranquil lines and even planes, of prodigal sunlight, of meandering life, everything suggests calm gone before and lasting calm to follow. And his people, true to the earth, know how to draw all the honey out of it. It is a world not for man; but of men dogmatically confident and serene, whom caste has favored with high fortunes, a world of aristocratic

¹ The attribution of the Kahn picture will not be questioned. Its painting would fall into the period around 1490.

well-being and profane splendor in which it would be superfluous that anything should be concluded. In a vast *mise-en-scene* important personages seem to be gravely occupied doing important things without important consequences. It is as if they were playing a sort of public game which had to be attended to seriously but in which the stakes were to put it at its highest—personal dignity.

It is abundant, luminous, vain, lazy and unjaded. It shines with a contained happiness and, eternally young, smiles upon you with the wisdom of a sage. It is an enchanted garden created by some adolescent divinity whose dream was of far-off regions, bearing hillsides, fantastic palaces and proud caravels. But its god is also a loving god—who else could have created the deep blue of its skies, those clouds whiter and softer than ours, that vegetation strewn like gems over the ground, an atmosphere, hushed and caressing, and water lying motionless that it might do the world mirrored in it the utmost honor by showing its more magic beauty!

And yet there is not so much faith in the Eternity of nature in Carpaccio as the love of its naïve surprises, its enchantments, its refinements; and if he does not deepen it he extends it with promise of inexhaustible variety. He does not spiritualize nature like Giorgione nor like Titian endow it with a direct vital force, but he elicits from it an ecstatic, romantic and amiable beauty.

* * * *

A corner of such a world flashes upon us in the large canvas representing St. Eustace in a landscape. Dappled by a lively contrast of dark and light patches seen through a faint lingering silvery shimmer the spell of blue green and golden color announces the rapturous freshness of morning. Everything merges in a congruous vision of nature, and the armored and unhaloed figure in it is its only religious pretext. There is no crude indication of the saint's identity, of which we become aware only through the stag, his attribute, unobtrusively placed at the right beyond the angle of his elbow. Otherwise he is a knight who has sauntered into the picture unnoticed, drawing his sword with a deliberate menacing movement.

The ostensible motive of the picture declares itself in the position and prominence of St. Eustace, who stands in an area upright like himself, and determined by his proportions, consequently dominated by his presence. The tree at his left, the vertical boundary of the



CARPACCIO: ST. EUSTACE IN A LANDSCAPE
Collection of Mr. Otto H. Kahn, New York



masonry at his right and the clouds heaped over his head, form a confining frame for him. He rises in the calculated centre of the foreground in which all the objects, cut by the same metallic hardness of contour, establish it against the paler world farther back. The symmetry of the pattern and the contiguous erect lines stabilize the figure; and the sharp outline of the smooth armor cut by the long keen-edged blades of light detach it from everything about it.

Behind him a frieze of landscape drifts away rhythmically towards the unknown. The descending horizon, the pond's edge, the nearest path carry us from the soaring perspective of verticals at the left and from the crisp foreground of leaves and flowers, across the sheet of flat ground, past the sleeping water within which another world lies dreaming, to the dying distance. It is like a musical accompaniment—sustained at a steadily diminishing audibility—to a dominant theme. The black and yellow lancer gliding in like a bright phantom of chivalry upon the unsuspecting scene, strikes the direction and tempo of the movement. The young lord of the castle which enframes him, he is riding forth to disport himself doubtless under the loggia of his mistress, and we know he will no longer be in sight when we next look up. Above, the birds make themselves masters of the air as in some aurora of blissful awakening, and only because the calm is so complete and benignant do the living things range or lie about so recklessly.

Such a favorable milieu, however, was not enough to produce the knight of our picture. He has all the pride and splendor proper to his environment, but he owes much of his spiritual ancestry to the severer Florentine tradition. This young Christian crusader appears almost a century earlier in the Donatello's St. George, and first assumed such a defiant ease in Castagno's Pippo Spano. And yet how profound is the disparity between our picture and Florentine painting, whose influence in this instance stops there—whose general influence stopped long before with Mantegna. With the preëminent exception of Piero di Cosimo—contemporary Florentine painting is still largely true to its tradition of transcendentalism and timelessness. It conceives the world as abstract energy and man (by a deliberate and immemorial anthropomorphism) its embodiment. It places him in the centre of the universe, supreme and self-justified, and the earth and the sky bear only a theoretical relevance to him.

The Kahn picture, on the other hand, is a rapturous vision of a blessed world to live in, a poetic ideation of intimate and expansive experience of nature. There is an equal—one might say pantheistic—

attachment to every separate object of an adored universe, a sort of idolatry of its benign and tonic forces—and every component has the same pictorial status within the canvas. The unity of this painting is accordingly not in integrity of design, but in optical consistency, not in timelessness and concentration, but in a pervading principle of life. We are carried down the landscape, part of a continuous panorama, with a sense of the drift of time—past all the radiant spectacle, with a sense of a changing though definite mood of day; but just as this bright portion of the world reveals the splendid secret of the whole, so within this moment reposes a sense of eternal periodicity.

Richard Offner.

THE MODERN TENDENCY IN HENRI, SLOAN AND BELLOWS

HENRI, Sloan and Bellows are expounders of the modern tendency and philosopher-painters, yet they are better painters than philosophers. Their models live and breathe on the canvas. With trenchant wit they hack out their pictures from the raw stuff of life. But their philosophy limps a bit, for these rejecters of formulas make a formula of their rejections.

At the Art League, Sloan took Bellows' place for three weeks in our portrait class. He was a terribly-in-earnest man about painting, sociology, philosophy—everything. In particular he was the apostle of a certain system for setting the palette, which he explained with impressive detail. Notwithstanding his abhorrence of formulas, attainment seemed to depend on that formula for arranging color. When the class changed hands we heard less from Bellows about that particular color scale (although upon inquiry he admitted its importance); instead of color technicalities he emitted at every pore theories of the universe, which lacked the grip of his painting.

Robert Henri was a great man at the League: his admiring pupils hung upon his inspired word like grapes upon the parent stem. His brush work is bold; he is sure of himself, almost too sure—although he and the other modernists scorn formulas, every one of them has his own formula, and Henri most of all. His portraits have



JOHN SLOAN: THE WIND STORM
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York





ROBERT HENRI: THE GYPSY
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



GEORGE BELLOWS: PORTRAIT



more of crisp certainty than Bellows', Bellows' work suggests a growing organism, Henri's brilliant crystallization. Of the two Bellows gets deeper beneath the surface, but neither of them quite reaches the depths where great Art has its source. Henri's portraits are splendid in vigor, verve and vivacity. What then do they lack?—the same quality which the work of Sloan and Bellows also lacks—something beautiful and intangible,—but, of the three, Bellows comes nearest to achieving it.

Henri's painting is more convincing than his philosophy. He is a fluent mouthpiece of his own theories. According to him no real artist should let himself be shackled by his family, his nation or his race. He disclaims patriotism in "the narrow sense," ignoring what a role national consciousness has played in the history of art development both in the Orient and the Occident. He is down on the Puritan, yet the Puritan grounded the bedrock of American freedom, broke old world fetters and initiated a new order of things, which is what Henri himself would define as genius.

The human body is for Henri a symbol of his philosophy. His rendering of the eye in its lustre and richness is especially striking. He refuses to restrict himself to any one type: he paints childlike children: his outdoor portraits have something of the healthy robustness of Franz Hals; he brilliantly portrays elegant modernity: he is particularly fond of the great Southwest, for there he says individuals are developed as nature intended. In painting the almond eyes of the Chinese-American girl, the melancholy gaze of the Indian, the naively passionate face of the Mexican, the gnarled old Chinaman, he is using models which illustrate his theories of independence from conventional restrictions, yet in portraying both naive and sophisticated types, he is something of a salonnier.

The Spanish gypsy in the Metropolitan Museum is a good example of Henri's handling of the gypsy type, although this portrait has less crisp brilliancy than some of his work.

George Bellows is a less sophisticated painter than Henri and perhaps more uneven in accomplishment; he is not yet crystallized into final shape—in ten years he will be a greater artist than he is now. His character is continually developing his painting and his painting is reacting upon his character: his wholesomeness will prevent his ever becoming onesided or eccentric. His experimental frame of mind brings him into contact with an astounding variety of life: he is a dynamic force in the art of today.

His purpose in painting a picture is not to ornament wall paper, but to generate power. He is sometimes criticised for lacking the decorative sense yet every one of his portraits has a carefully thought out scheme of decoration which is essentially a part of it, although not superficially apparent.

In the manipulation of ripe and luscious pigment he is a master. He impresses upon art students the importance of painting with a fat brush and of working with the best utensils in order that all unnecessary friction may be eliminated. He tells them painting is difficult enough without making it more so by imperfect tools. Although Bellows is a college graduate he believes that the artist must educate himself, and that he can best do this by exposing himself to the ripening influence of some great man in his own field: personal contact is according to him the best educator.

While admitting the greatness of the old masters, he is determined to go his own gait. He wants America to be a self feeding nation in art, cutting loose from past periods. In theory he is quite radical, yet in practising his art he is not altogether the iconoclast he prides himself on being; he is too fundamentally sane and broadminded to be an extremist.

John Sloan is a staunch friend and admirer of Henri and Bellows. When quite young he responded to the modern movement. He has been a hard worker, has made himself. Art work on a Philadelphia paper taught him the rough and ready contact with the crowd which he uses to advantage in his painting.

Sloan is preeminently interested in human beings—he gets them on the run caught in the very act of their most human daily occupations. He specializes in southwestern scenes, also in scenes of lower New York, putting his creed of the unsentimental intellectual into his work;—burlesque, realism, keen observation of everyday life from the view point of the idealistic materialist. The working classes have in him an ardent advocate, full to the brim of the pet phrases of the sociological humanitarian, very proud of his theories which he expounds with the dogmatism of his ilk.

Although a socialist, he will not be tied down to socialism. He abhors fetters, abhors also conventionality, indeed he almost makes a formula of his abhorrences. He does not hesitate to paint ugly women even extremely fat ones, for he refuses to be shackled to good taste and beauty. His work has vitality and a certain dogged strength.

Sloan's "Dust Storm" at the Metropolitan Museum is a very



GILBERT STUART: SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

PAINTED IN LONDON IN 1784

Exhibition of Early American Portraits, Union League Club, New York





JOHN S. COPLEY: GAIUS BROWN
PAINTED IN BOSTON IN 1763

Exhibition of Early American Patriots, Union League Club, New York



GILBERT STUART: MRS. RICHARD YATES
PAINTED IN NEW YORK IN 1793

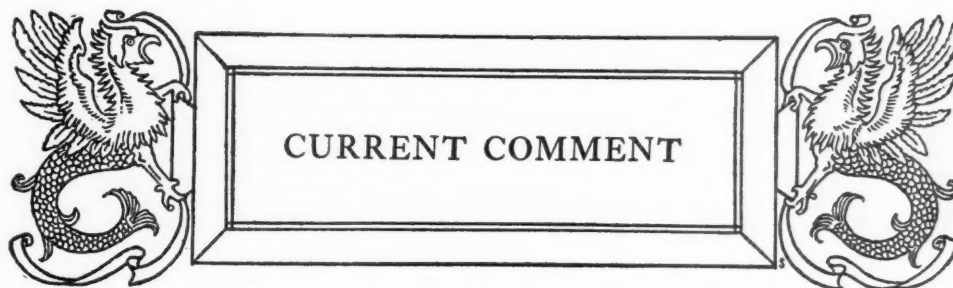


much alive picture—a slice of struggling, laughing humanity, twisted and driven by natural forces—content to be happy, angry or frightened animals—so does this artist see the human panorama, and scorns to put a deeper meaning into it, for that would be “uplift” or sentimentality. He is proud of his belligerent attitude: he inscribes on his brow for all men to see the intense furrows of the thinking painter.

His work might be classed under the Philadelphia, New York and New Mexico periods. He began by doing grey things, then his color grew brighter—sometimes very bright indeed; his recent New Mexico pictures are frequently rather sombre, when they are not lurid. In his three periods we find his central idea—he glories in the crudely commonplace and rejects man transcending himself. “Keep your feet on the ground, little man of dust,” his work seems to say, “but spin all the while—drolly, madly, tragically as the case may be.”

The modern movement in portrait and figure painting finds in Sloan, Bellows and Henri forceful and dexterous expression. If we look to them for suavity of treatment or for high distinction we shall be disappointed, if we seek in their work vigorous portrayal of the human spectacle we shall find it.

Catherine Beach Ely



EXHIBITIONS

AMERICAN PORTRAITS, EARLY.

The twelve Gilbert Stuarts of the European period gathered by Mr. Thomas B. Clarke and shown at the Union League Club during January illustrated pretty effectively his abilities, including perfunctory performances like the two Royal portraits and masterpieces such as the Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Sir John Dick. The former is unquestionably finer than many of the pictures

of the English eighteenth century portrait painters which are so popular today. The first president of the Royal Academy is presented here as a human being, not as an historic figure. Free from conscious flattery, it achieves distinction easily. A simple, direct piece of painting it carries conviction as a true likeness of an heroic personality. The Sir John Dick is full of color, introduced by way of military dress and the Decorations. The pose is well chosen and sensibly increases the impressiveness of the presentation, while the fine reds, blues and golds intrigue and satisfy the eye. The canvas is fully inscribed and signed and dated by the artist—one of a very few signed works extant. Another contribution of note was the large self-portrait of Benjamin West, painted in London in 1793; the best portrait from the hand of the American president of the Royal Academy seen here this year.

For the February exhibition Mr. Clarke succeeded in getting together sixteen of the portraits painted in this country by Gilbert Stuart, including incisive interpretations of character like the companion pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Yates (1793) and the handsome color ensemble of the William Constable (1794) where the rich blue coat is no less intriguing than the sunny disposition of the sitter. The small half-length Cyrus Griffin in a black coat with velvet collar, seated at a writing table, is an interesting example in "small" by the artist. The other portraits from his brush included famous figures of the past like William Thornton, the architect of the first Capitol at Washington, and John Jacob Astor (1794), the founder of one of the great American fortunes. The earliest works shown were the Copley—a rather loose and impressive portrait of Gawen Brown, father of Mather Brown the artist,—and the Smibert, Stephen De Lancey, much freer in technic and finer in composition; the former painted in 1763 and the latter in 1734. As an American primitive nothing finer than this Smibert has been shown to date. It combines the sincerity of the earliest painters with the subtlety of their successors and marks the birth of the modern school in America.

